

Interning Online at the Field Museum

Sarah Solver



EXHIBITIONS DEVELOPMENT INTERN, SPRING 2021



About the Intern



Education

Sarah Solver is a second-year student in Loyola University Chicago's Interdisciplinary Honors Program studying anthropology and psychology.

Exhibitions Development Internship

Sarah adores museums. She was so excited when she saw the internship of Handshake, she submitted her application within 2 days of its posting in November 2020.

Two months later in January 2021, Sarah began her internship with Exhibitions Development for the Spring 2021 semester and has loved every moment since.

Professional Goals

Sarah has always had a passion for learning. Her experience with Exhibitions has inspired her to explore museum careers as a way to satisfy her ever-growing curiosity and share her passion with others.

About the Field Museum

Background and history

1893 World's Columbian Exposition

- The Field's collections originated at the World's Columbian Exposition
- There were over 65,000 exhibitions at the Exposition
- The Field is named after Marshall Field who donated \$1 million to give the Exposition's natural history and anthropological collections a permanent home

1894 and Onward

- The collections were moved to the Columbian Museum of Chicago in 1894, which was located where the current Museum of Science and Industry now stands
- The museum moved to its current home in 1920
- Since opening, the Field's anthropological and natural history collections have grown to around 40 million artifacts and specimens.

From Field Museum, 2019, <https://www.fieldmuseum.org/>. Copyright 2019 by Field Museum..



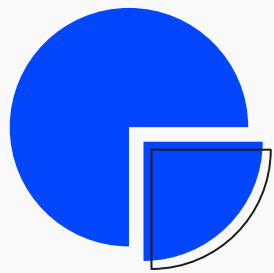
Mission:



"The Field Museum fuels a journey of discovery across time to enable solutions for a brighter future rich in nature and culture."



Exhibitions Development



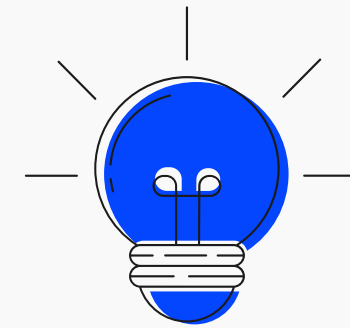
Plans exhibitions.

- Preliminary background research
- Meeting with scientists/curators
- Exhibition goals



Writes and **organizes** content.

- Storytelling- anything in an exhibition containing words is written by a developer
- Object selection
- Determine narrative structure



Co-creates visitor experiences.

- Collaborate with designers to create visuals and interactive elements

Current Projects

North American Hall Renovation

Indigenous community members from across North America are collaborating with the Field Museum to update its North American Hall. Native stories, experiences and culture will be shared by indigenous voices to encapsulate the beauty, diversity, and strength of their communities and land.

Wild Color

Specimens from all of the Field's collections will star in this exhibition highlighting all of nature's colors.

and more!

Due to the nature of this internship, some exhibitions have not yet been announced to the public and cannot be .

Sarah is excited to see that her work will have a lasting impact for years into the future and looks forward to sharing her contributions when the time comes!



Tasks and Duties

Creating Info Packets

Researches a variety of topics and objects. Info packets are created as a resource for developers to reference and familiarize themselves with topics covered in an exhibition.

Some topics Sarah has researched include:

- Near-death experiences and resuscitation
- Color mutations in animals
 - Gynandromorphism, albinism, and color differences in wild and domesticated members of the same species
- Contemporary Spiritualism
 - The rise and transformation of the Spiritualist movement in the US and Europe from 1850 to now

Supporting Other Interns

Works with fellow interns to navigate challenging assignments and contributes to Developers Wiki and EMu Guide (how-to guides) for future intern/developer use.

Attending Meetings

Meetings vary depending the project and what stage of development the exhibit is in.

Collaborating on Object Lists

Organizes scientist/curator notes, locates specimens and artifacts, and transcribes curator-led collection tours.

Managing Spreadsheets and Databases

Organizes objects, text, media, and more in databases institutional databases and exhibition spreadsheets.

Professional Development

Interns are encouraged to reach out to other museum employees, have informational interviews, and learn more about museum roles.

...and more!

Meetings

Meetings vary depending the project and where in the development process the exhibit is. Online, meetings are held on both Google Meets and Zoom.

● Exhibit Team Meetings: Weekly

Exhibit specific teams of developers, designers, production, and more meet to share important updates and progress

○ Intern Check-Ins: Weekly

1-1 meetings with supervisor to receive assignments, share updates on progress, and ask any questions about tasks or meetings.

● Airtable Updates: Bi-weekly

Primarily used for North American Hall Airtable updates.

Developers: Weekly

Weekly meetings with all exhibit developers and interns to brainstorm, give updates on projects, practice presentations, and more.

Intern Seminar: Weekly

All development interns meet with their supervisor to work on assignments and learn about the exhibitions process.

Exhibit Breakout: As needed

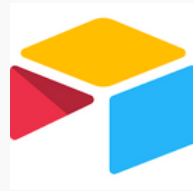
Meetings to "deep-dive" into concept and design.

Other meetings:

- Exhibitions Quarterly
- All-staff Quarterly

Technology

This internship has exposed me to technologies such as:



Airtable

A spreadsheet/database hybrid used to organize exhibition development



Field Museum Collections



Field Museum Photo Archives



Google Workspace

Sites, Sheets, Slides, Docs, Drive, Gmail, Jamboard, Meets, Calendar, etc.



KE EMu: Electronic Museum

A giant, relational database that organizes everything associated with the museum



InqScribe

Transcription software

Thank you!

A huge thanks to the developers at the Field,
especially internship supervisor, Marie Georg.

I have gained so much valuable experience and
wisdom from this internship that I could not
have learned in a traditional classroom setting. I
appreciate your leadership and guidance
throughout this whole semester.



From *Field Museum*, 2019, <https://www.fieldmuseum.org/>. Copyright 2019 by Field Museum..

References

Field Museum (2021). *About the Field Museum*. <https://www.fieldmuseum.org/about>

Field Museum (2021). *Field Museum History*. <https://www.fieldmuseum.org/about/history>.

Non-Developers, Start Here (2021). Developer's Wiki. Retrieved April 2021, from

<https://sites.google.com/fieldmuseum.org/developerswiki/start-here>